

LETTERS

Concerning reprint of "San Francisco Chronicle" article on a Proposed Medical Service Law: Additional information and correction concerning the same.*

LEO H. SHAPIRO
Attorney at Law

San Francisco, California,
April 22, 1937.

California and Western Medicine
Room 2004, 450 Sutter Street
San Francisco California
Attention Frederick C. Warnshuis
Gentlemen:

In your issue of March, 1937, on page 212 thereof, you have published an article under the title, "Bill (Williams) Not Health Insurance," by Chester Rowell. This article purports to be a copy of an article as published by Chester Rowell in the *San Francisco Chronicle* on September 17, 1936.

The portion of the article which is particularly objectionable to me is the statement that the bill which is described in the article was drafted by me on behalf of Credit Unions. For your information, Mr. Rowell, in subsequent articles in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, after receiving the true facts in connection with the statements previously published by him, editorially retracted any statements in connection with such bill as applicable to me.

For your information, I had nothing whatever to do with the preparation of any medical or health bill. Credit Unions are interested in securing proper and adequate health insurance, to be strictly supervised and to be rendered according to the best standards of the medical profession. They are not interested in rackets of any kind or nature, and they want to see physicians duly and adequately paid, without any deductions for any promotional propositions.

I would, therefore, appreciate the correction or retraction of the article as published by you, and I would suggest that you contact Mr. Rowell in order to confirm the statements which I have made herein.

Appreciating your prompt response, I am
68 Post Street.

Yours truly,
(Signed) LEO SHAPIRO.

Concerning syphilis: A letter from a United States Fleet medical officer.

UNITED STATES FLEET
U. S. S. PENNSYLVANIA, FLAGSHIP
San Pedro, California,
March 30, 1937.

J. P. Nuttall, M. D.
President, Los Angeles County Medical Association.
Dear Doctor:

The disease syphilis is acquired by the men of the Navy during periods of leave and liberty ashore. Approximately 10 per cent of our crews have this disease. The major part of the United States Fleet bases for most of the year on two ports of Southern California, Los Angeles and San Diego. A very large proportion of new admissions for syphilis are acquired in the State of California. For this reason the renewal of interest in the control of syphilis being taken in California brings to us a ray of hope. For many years the Navy has brought early diagnosis, early segregation of the infectious and early treatment to bear upon this disease within the confines of its own environment. The increasing evidence that similar activity is now contemplated on a state-wide and perhaps a nation-wide basis is heartening indeed.

Statements which have appeared recently in the Bulletin of the Los Angeles County Medical Association relate to the pressing need for greater activity by all physicians and public health activities. Such an attack upon this disease will succeed in reducing its incidence in the population. It is most gratifying to see that the leadership of your influential society is being brought to bear upon this problem.

The 65,000 men of the Fleet, whose medical care devolves upon naval surgeons, are protected by prophylactics to only

* This letter from Attorney Shapiro is printed for the information of all concerned.—Editor.

a small degree. They, therefore, must place their hope for effective action against the physicians in the civil community.

We hope that the effort now being made in the Legislature of the State of California to write into the statutes a strong and effective legal basis for better control of syphilis will be successful. We hope that as leaders of medical action in the metropolitan center of Los Angeles your society will realize that we follow your activities in this campaign with the greatest interest. We in the Fleet stand ready to cooperate to the fullest extent with any laws or regulations civilian authority may enact to lessen the incidence of this widespread and active destroyer of human life and health.

Sincerely and hopefully yours,

(Signed) GEORGE F. COTTLE,
Captain, (M. C.) United States Navy,
Fleet Medical Officer.

Concerning California's indigent transient problem.

LOS ANGELES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

April 15, 1937.

Dear Dr. Kress:

Reference is made to my letter of March 22. The fact that you have not heard from me sooner does not mean that we are not deeply interested in the indigent transient problem in California, and its solution.

Apparently, from the opinion rendered by the Attorney-General's office, there is no doubt that the entrance of those who are sick and liable to become a burden upon the community can be stopped. Indeed, the decision seems to me to go much further and recognize the right of the state to keep out those who may become a public charge on the state and county.

The Chamber has a special committee studying this whole problem. This committee would be very glad to go into this phase of the matter and, if you find time, I would very much appreciate it if you would meet with the group.

Very truly yours,

LOS ANGELES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.
Arthur G. Arnoll,
Secretary and General Manager.

Concerning State Medical Board's interpretation of emergency medical care.

The item below, with the notation by the editor of the publication, is taken from the *Yuba City Independent-Farmer*:

Editor's Note.—The following letter from Dr. Charles B. Pinkham, Secretary-Treasurer of the Board of Medical Examiners of the State of California, is discussed in full in the editorial columns of today's *Independent-Farmer*.

San Francisco, California,
March 20, 1937.

Re Medical Practice Act.
Editor, Independent-Farmer
Yuba City, Sutter County, California
Dear Sir:

Permit me to correct your misrepresentation of the Medical Practice Act, as expressed in the editorial printed in the *Yuba City, California, Independent-Farmer*, March 2, 1937. Therein you claim that such procedure as applying iodine to a skinned knee or using methol or aspirin tablets for a cold, or removing a cinder from an eye, constitutes a violation of the Medical Practice Act.

May we call your attention to Section 22 of said Act, reading in part as follows:

"Nothing in this Act shall be construed to prohibit service in case of emergency or the domestic administration of family remedies."

Hence, your suggestion that a "school employee is in danger of arrest if he or she applies iodine to a scratch or puts a protective bit of gauze on a skinned knee" is a misstatement of fact.

The situation which occasioned your editorial arose because a public health school nurse was reported to have taken it upon herself to diagnose a skin disease and prescribe a remedy therefor. This is strictly prohibited under